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FOOD

BY TODD SOUTH



Brauhaus 701 serves traditional German food alongside recognizable bar classics.
PHOTO/ALLISON YOUNG

At wurst

Brauhaus 701 has entered the midtown scene with a decent selection of German (and other) beers, a menu of Teutonic dishes alongside American bar staples, and even a few vegan options. The kitchen is open until closing time. Although beer tasting flights are available, I was drawn to a local seasonal from Great Basin Brewing, “Deathwish” American Pale Ale (\$10, 24-ounce serving). The brews are poured in 16-, 24- and 32-ounce vessels, so you might want to keep a rideshare app on standby.

Service was so on the ball, I felt guilty about time lost while making our selections amidst lively conversation. A large pretzel (\$6) was served warm with a choice of beer cheese sauce, cheesy aioli or spicy mustard. We went with beer cheese. It was everything you’d want from a soft pretzel. Next was an order of duck fat fries (\$6) served in what could pass for a salad bowl. The fries are twice deep-fried in the Belgian style, then tossed in hot duck fat for flavor. They were crispy, salty and quite good, but we didn’t realize until near the end that a pool of delicious, meaty duck goodness lay at the bottom. Once re-tossed they were incredible, so stir ‘em up for optimum enjoyment. A small side of chilled German red potato salad (\$5) with bacon, diced onion, Dijon mustard and fresh dill followed. Unfortunately, the tubers were a bit on the undercooked, crisp side.

A “small” wurst board (\$15) featured grilled bratwurst, frankfurter and polish sausage served with baguette rounds, sauerkraut, pepperoncini, bell pepper and spicy mustard. The meats were very good, and the mild kraut was warm and tasted like it had been grilled with the sausages. I’m not sure what the peppers were about, but we ate them. A pickle board (\$12) included cucumber spears and rounds, cauliflower, beetroot, red

onion, artichoke heart, kalamata and green olive, carrot, celery and pepperoncini and came with a side of spicy mustard. Other than the olives, artichoke and peppers, everything appeared to be of the “fresh pickle” variety, steeped or dressed in seasoned, sour-sweet brine for a short time. Though quite flavorful, most of the veg was very crispy—bordering on raw. The onion was particularly good.

There are a few burgers and sandwiches to choose from, and the BH burger (\$12) is worth ordering. A well-seasoned, third-pound Angus beef patty cooked medium was topped with bratwurst, bacon, lettuce, onion, tomato and beer cheese sauce on a pretzel bun. It was tender, not too greasy and just a bit tangy and came with those bomb fries.

A metal tea tray of pork *wienerschnitzel* with mac ‘n’ cheese (\$9) left me wanting a proper plate, but the breaded, pounded pork loin was crispy, moist and tender. It was topped with a hearty onion and mushroom beef gravy. My Czech-Viennese grandmother introduced me to *schnitzel* and a mild Bohemian variant on kraut, and I couldn’t help but think she would have enjoyed those served to me at Brauhaus. Though the macaroni was cooked into submission, it was baked with a creamy five cheese goo, slivers of onion, and bread crumb topping. Like many of us, I grew up with boxed mac ‘n’ cheese and later learned to cook more elevated examples. Unlike the panoply of too dry or too wet varieties I’ve experienced in recent years at trendy eateries, this comforting, delicious rendition was something I’d come back for again and again. □

Brauhaus 701

713 S. Virginia St., 384-6756

Brauhaus 701 is open from 11 a.m. to midnight. Learn more at brauhaus701.com.